



# House Select Committee on Homeland Security **Democrats**

**JIM TURNER, Ranking Member**

[www.house.gov/hsc/democrats/](http://www.house.gov/hsc/democrats/)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 1, 2004**

**Contact: Scott Bates**

**(202) 226-2616**

## ***TURNER CALLS FOR STRONGER PORT SECURITY***

Commenting on the July 1 deadline for U.S. ports to comply with security regulations under the Maritime Transportation Security Act, Congressman Jim Turner, Ranking Member of the Select Committee on Homeland Security, made the following comments:

**“We still have a long way to go to secure our ports,”** said Congressman Jim Turner, Ranking Member of the U.S. House Select Committee on Homeland Security. **“America remains at risk and is still facing serious security gaps in cargo and port security.”**

“Many of America’s 361 seaports are in the process of complying with the new port security regulations, but the Administration’s budget will only cover about 5 percent of the estimated \$1.1 billion in compliance costs required for this year,” said Turner. “We must move faster and take stronger measures to secure our ports and protect America.”

“Not only do we need to improve physical security at our ports, but our national security requires that we screen every cargo container that comes into the United States for nuclear or radiological materials. This is not happening today, and America remains at risk to nuclear terrorism,” said Turner.

“Right now cargo containers do not have strong tamper proof locks and seals. Terrorists could exploit security this weakness to bring a weapon of mass destruction into the country in a container. Yet, no security standards for container locks or seals exist,” said Turner. “DHS must move today to close this dangerous security gap.”

“The security of our nation’s ports also rests on the ability of the U.S. Coast Guard to operate 21<sup>st</sup> century ships and aircraft that can secure our ports and seacoast from terrorist infiltration. According to the Administration’s schedule, it will take until the year 2026 to get the Coast Guard up to speed by completing its “Project Deepwater”. We need to complete this mission in 10 years, and give the Coast Guard the tools it needs to protect our ports,” said Turner.

###